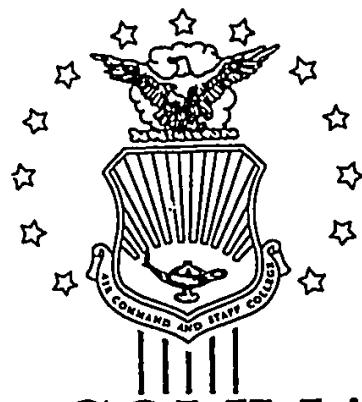


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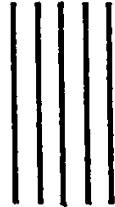
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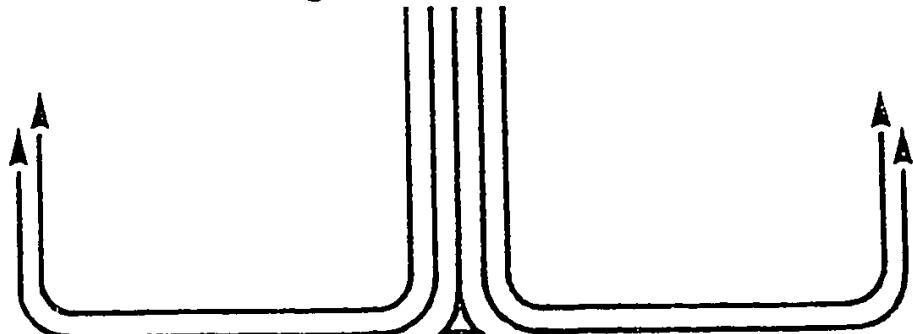
## STUDENT REPORT

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CHINESE NUCLEAR POLICY:  
PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE

MAJOR ROBERT L. LEININGER, 150- 88-1555

"insights into tomorrow"



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## PREFACE

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This report on China's nuclear policy is intended for use by the Defense Intelligence Agency as an unclassified reference source to provide background for future reports and briefings, subject to review and approval of content by DIA.

The author wishes to acknowledge the valuable assistance of Dr. Russell W. Ramsey of the ACSC Faculty and Captain Ronald W. Iseman of the Defense Intelligence Agency.

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Major Robert L. Leininger is a student at Air Command and Staff College, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama. Major Leininger is an Air Intelligence Officer with professional and academic background in strategic forces analysis, ballistic missile operations, international relations, and Chinese studies.

He enlisted in the United States Air Force in 1971. Following Basic Training he attended the Defense Language Institute at Monterey, California, and was assigned as a linguist in Thailand and Taiwan. After reaching the rank of Staff Sergeant he returned to the United States in 1975 to attend Air Force Officer Training School. A Distinguished Military Graduate of OTS, he was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant and assigned to ballistic missile operations. After completing ICBM Combat Crew Training at Vandenberg Air Force Base, California, he reported to the 321st Strategic Missile Wing (SAC), Grand Forks Air Force Base, North Dakota. From 1975 to 1979 he served as a Minuteman ICBM launch officer, combat crew commander, and instructor combat crew commander. From 1979 to 1983 he served on the faculty of the United States Air Force Academy as an instructor and assistant professor of Political Science. From 1983 to 1987 he was assigned as a research analyst at the Defense Intelligence Agency, Washington, D.C. He left that assignment to attend Air Command and Staff College.

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Major Leininger's military awards include the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal, and the Air Force Commendation Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster. He was awarded the Senior Missileman badge.

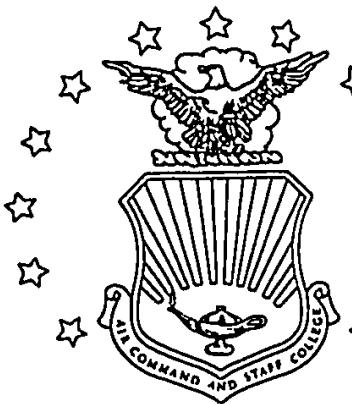
Major Leininger was promoted to his present rank 1 September 1986.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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REPORT NUMBER 88-1555

AUTHOR(S) MAJOR ROBERT L. LEININGER, USAF

TITLE CHINESE NUCLEAR POLICY: PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE

I. Purpose: To provide an unclassified reference source on Chinese nuclear policy for U.S. national-level reports and briefings.

II. Problem: To identify major patterns in the development of China's nuclear policy and to use any such patterns to predict future trends or contingencies.

III. Data: China's nuclear policy can be described as "minimal deterrence" plus "leverage". China possesses a relatively small nuclear force including weapons deliverable against the United States or the Soviet Union. Much of scholarly interest on China's nuclear policy has appeared in the West. Most openly available, nonclassified scholarship is Western. Chinese nuclear policy is not a principal subject of generally available Soviet scholarship. There are relatively few comprehensive articles available representing Chinese scholarship; what is available mostly represents Chinese positions on nuclear disarmament and justifications for China's nuclear force. High-level Chinese pronouncements prior to 1965 or 1966 (the initial activation of China's nuclear force) gradually shifted to reflect the justification and utility of a Chinese nuclear force. High-level Chinese pronouncements since that time consistently seek to project a sense of responsibility as a nuclear power, and move increasingly closer to negotiable positions on disarmament. Chinese pronouncements have become increasingly detailed, including indirect or isolated references to nuclear strategy and doctrine. Retrospective coverage has added a great

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## CONTINUED

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deal of detail of background to the decisions to establish and build the nuclear force, but has shed less additional light on doctrine and strategy, and on the policy process regarding disarmament issues.

IV. Conclusions: China's nuclear policy behavior is consistent with a rational-actor model based on state interests and state power. China regards its nuclear force as a means of deterring threats to its existence, and as a means of deterring "nuclear blackmail" against actions that China may find it necessary to take in its national interest. In addition, the nuclear force contributes to China's prestige as a major power. It is apparent that China's image of its relationship to the world is as a major power operating on the basis of state interests in an international system characterized by a power balance among major actors. China sees itself in a position of maneuverability, taking advantage of shifting power relations to apply its own power in the national interest of itself and its friends and clients. For the foreseeable future, China's objectives are to maintain a peaceful international environment favorable to its economic development and to increase its international influence to support its desired status as an independent global and regional actor.

## Chapter One

### INTRODUCTION

China possesses a strategic nuclear force that includes weapons deliverable against the United States or the Soviet Union. The force may be small and in some respects limited in sophistication, but the fact that it exists and the fact that it can deliver weapons against the superpowers makes it significant in the international balance of power. A problem of interest to U.S. policy makers is whether major patterns can be identified in the development of China's nuclear policy, and whether any such patterns can be used to predict future trends or contingencies.

### BACKGROUND OF THE PROBLEM

China's nuclear policy can be described as "minimal deterrence" plus "leverage". China possesses a land-based force of roughly a hundred nuclear-armed ballistic missiles, of which a handful are intercontinental, as well as at least one nuclear submarine armed with nuclear missiles, and a force of medium-range jet bombers capable of carrying nuclear bombs (44:268). The land-based force is characterized by dispersion, concealment, and mobility, which enhance survivability; although the missiles are relatively primitive and have slow reaction times (44:277). Jencks believes the Chinese may be able to adapt their submarine-launched missile, which is solid-fueled, for land use as a mobile missile of medium range (*ibid.*). Forces of this type, size, and composition are logically more suited to a retaliatory deterrent role than to a first-strike role against a major nuclear power, particularly if it is assumed these relatively primitive missiles also have limited accuracy, and therefore limited capability to disarm an opponent's nuclear forces through a first-strike attempt.

The primary objective of China's nuclear policy is first to prevent the military defeat of the PRC; through threat of retaliation, and second to deter general war involving the superpowers. Robinson identified three aspects of minimal defense capability with reference to the Soviet Union (publicly identified by the Chinese since the late 1960s as the greatest military threat): "deterring the Soviet Union from initiating conflict with China, being able to punish the Russians severely if they actually did invade, and eventually throwing them back out again" (52:245). The retaliatory capability of China's nuclear forces acts by threatening a degree of damage incompatible with an aggressor's political objectives. A recent study by the Beijing Institute for International Strategic Studies, cited in the Japan Times, asserted that "the Soviet Union would not launch a nuclear attack against China because it could not destroy all of China's nuclear weapons in

a first strike and would therefore face a nuclear counterattack" (65:247). If a retaliatory strike actually takes place, it may be aimed to dislocate the attacker's war effort and morale in order to relieve military pressure on China. The deterrent effect is enhanced by the calculation that 'limited war' between two nuclear powers carries the risk of a nuclear exchange, and by China's human geography, which makes successful invasion and military defeat doubtful (61:27-28). The deterrent effect also holds against the United States, which is vulnerable to Chinese nuclear strikes against its regional interests and against its homeland, and which has even less capability to mount a successful invasion and less incentive to launch a nuclear attack against China.

The second deterrent effect, against general war involving the superpowers, is more subtle and relates to power-balancing theory. China frequently describes its military force, including its nuclear force, as a force for "safeguarding world peace" (69:13-20). How this might work is seen by first examining a bilateral balance of forces. If one attacks and the other retaliates, the side with the greater remaining capability then has the advantage, assuming any practical or restorable military capability does survive on either side. Now consider the addition of a third power, even with much smaller nuclear forces. Under conceivable circumstances China, as a third party, could tilt the balance between two other adversaries such as the United States and the Soviet Union. This could also happen if either attempted a devastating attack against China and thereby depleted the forces available for use against the other superpower, or if either launched an attack against the other and left China's forces relatively intact. Given a rough balance between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R., it is conceivable that China could present a large enough target system itself, and at some point acquire a large enough nuclear force, to deter general war involving the superpowers.

An additional objective is to support and protect China's assertion of an independent foreign policy as a major power. As Mao Zedong put it in 1956, "If we are not to be bullied in the present-day world, we cannot do without the [atom] bomb" (14:Vol.5:288-89). Marshal Nie Rongzhen, placed in charge of China's scientific and technical program in 1956, wrote in his memoirs that after the success of the nuclear and missile programs, "The superpowers' nuclear monopoly and their attempts at atomic blackmail had failed. The Chinese people would never submit to nuclear pressure" (47:19). Historically the PRC has sought to pursue an independent national policy, and the possession of a deterrent force serves to relieve coercive pressure against that policy. Further, the possession of a nuclear force provides China with a degree of prestige and respect in the world. Clemens observed that China's nuclear program epitomizes Mao's declaration that "power grows out of the barrel of a gun," pointing out that few African and Asian countries condemned China for embarking on its nuclear program, and that there was increased pressure to seat the PRC in the United Nations from the time the nuclear program bore fruit (27:128-31). Clemens asserts that China's defensive diplomacy weakened the case for a surgical strike against China while not opposing a mutual nuclear freeze that would grant a certain equal recognition, and that China began to pursue a less cautious, more-forward foreign policy (*ibid.*). It must be added, however, that China has generally avoided seriously provocative actions toward either the U.S. or the Soviet Union.

This nuclear policy has been consistent in its objectives since the beginning of the nuclear program in the mid 1950s, and since the importance of nuclear weapons was recognized in the mid 1940s. In his famous interview with Anna Louise Strong in 1946, Mao Zedong asserted that "The atom bomb is a paper tiger" (14:Vol.4:97-101). On that occasion Mao was not deprecating the bomb's catastrophic destructive power. He was pointing out that the important thing was the nature and position of those who possessed the bomb, and of those upon whom its use was threatened. At no time has there been any Chinese attempt to duplicate Eisenhower's "New Look" defense policy, which advertised nuclear forces as an economical substitute for large conventional forces. During the mid 1960s and mid 1980s, when China did choose to emphasize nuclear weapons and not carry out massive reequipment of the bulk of the conventional forces, the nuclear program was intended to complement rather than replace those forces. Nuclear and conventional forces worked together, although apparently never combined organically, to produce the desired deterrent effect, especially against the Soviet Union.

#### SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROBLEM

With the test of a nuclear device on 16 October 1964, China entered the nuclear age. Two years later, 25 October 1966, China conducted a test in which a nuclear warhead was carried to its target by a medium-range ballistic missile and then successfully detonated. Less than a year after that, 14 June 1967, China successfully tested a thermonuclear device.

Today China possesses a nuclear force that is sizable in absolute terms and significant in capability (44:268), though limited in relation to the forces of the United States and the Soviet Union. China's possession of intercontinental ballistic missiles, however few in number, forces both the United States and the Soviet Union to take it seriously as a military power. China's numerous missiles of lesser range (*ibid.*) can reach the neighboring territory of the Soviet Union, as well as U.S. forces and friendly states in the region.

China's forces are an independent third quantity in any U.S. or Soviet calculation of the bilateral nuclear balance. This is of concern both to military planners and to arms negotiators. The Chinese are aware of their position, as indicated in vague statements about being "a force for peace" in the context of superpower rivalry. In addition, the Chinese have indicated they don't make nuclear policy in a vacuum but react to their environment. This was true when the Chinese described their first nuclear test as "breaking the nuclear monopoly of the superpowers", and continued to be true when they claimed to be able to "resist nuclear blackmail." It remains true as they consider the vulnerability of their nuclear weapons (for instance, to the Soviet SS-20 missiles or to ballistic missile defenses of the Soviet Union or the United States) and its impact on deterrence, and the need to take corrective measures (33:137). The Soviets implicitly acknowledged China's strategic position when the late Soviet leader Yuri Andropov addressed "Asian" concerns over potential relocation of Soviet SS-20 missiles based in the European U.S.S.R. (25:2).

U.S. arms control efforts are complicated by the desire of the U.S. and

the Soviet Union each to reserve a capability against China's forces, which represent a third and uncontrollable factor in the U.S.-Soviet balance. Such a 'hedge' could take two forms. On the one hand, either superpower could reserve for possible use against China some of the same types of ICBMs that form part of the central strategic balance. This would be more logical for the U.S. because of the roughly comparable ranges to China and to the Soviet Union. It would be less logical for the Soviets, because of the effect of 'wasting' a full-range missile's capability by targeting it against nearby China. Nevertheless, the Soviets are believed to have targeted some of their SS-11 ICBMs against China (21:158), although this class of missiles was covered in the SALT II negotiations. This would have the effect of inserting the 'China card' by subtracting the number of ICBMs reserved against China from the number available to use against the other superpower. This would explain the formerly insistent Soviet demands for "equal security" with respect to strategic forces, that is, for strategic forces sufficient to balance those of all other nuclear powers combined (see 62:163-64).

Alternatively, the Soviets could (and apparently did) deploy a missile such as the SS-20, which could reach (and deter) China without being able to reach the U.S. heartland. That, of course, would provide the Soviets with a China hedge outside of the central balance. The Soviets, then, could 'decouple' China from the central balance as far as Soviet security was concerned, while insisting that all suitable U.S. long-range weapons be controlled as part of the U.S.-Soviet central balance. Such a situation would subtract the long-range China hedge from U.S. capabilities against the Soviet Union, while leaving Soviet capabilities against the U.S. untouched and leaving the Soviets with a separate hedge against China. If the U.S. chose to ignore the China threat in allocating its long-range weapons, it would risk political repercussions with Asian countries if it used non-SALT weapons to maintain its hedge.

In either of the decoupling cases, China would see a reduction in its relative leverage against the Soviet Union. It could attempt to remedy the situation by an indirect approach: increasing the number of its ICBMs capable of reaching the U.S., which would force the U.S. to take notice and react, possibly in ways that would also provoke Soviet reaction. Alternatively, China could increase the number of lesser-range weapons, capable of reaching the U.S.S.R., which would force the Soviets to take notice and react, possibly in ways that would increase the potential threat to U.S. forces and friendly interests in Asia.

Even with the need to overcome the decoupling effects of the 'geographic imbalance', a determined China could decide to build its nuclear capabilities in an attempt to prevent decoupling, and in the process greatly complicate U.S.-Soviet attempts to negotiate their bilateral balance of power. China has no incentive--other than fiscal--to participate in a multilateral arms control 'package deal' as long as the superpowers hold such overwhelmingly superior forces. Indeed, the Chinese have formally insisted on an agreement for a 50-percent reduction in superpower nuclear forces as a precondition that would bring China to the negotiating table. At that point, China's forces would constitute a substantially enhanced lever in the strategic balance, and would give China a direct role in controlling U.S. and Soviet nuclear arms. China

may also be bluffing about negotiations, calculating either that the U.S. and the Soviets would never meet the precondition, or that eventual opening of multilateral negotiations would not force China into any unfavorable commitments.

Of course, one of the most disturbing aspects of China's nuclear policy is that it may lead to a more "forward" foreign policy directly hostile to U.S. interests, or indirectly hostile because of destabilizing effects (see 52:246). Scattered among numerous "peace-loving" and "purely defensive" Chinese statements is this comment following the H-bomb test in June 1967, early in the fiery Cultural Revolution period: "China has got atom bombs and guided missiles, and she now has the hydrogen bomb. This greatly heightens the morale of the revolutionary people throughout the world and greatly deflates the arrogance of imperialism, modern revisionism and all reactionaries" (quoted in 27:127).

#### ASSUMPTIONS AND LIMITATIONS

There are two critical, if obvious, assumptions to state at the outset of this study. The first is that, at any given time, there exists a Chinese nuclear policy. This is not to assert a priori that there is necessarily a logical, a consistent, or even a consistently developing policy. It is only to assume, as a minimum, that there exists at a given time a responsible authority for significant programs and decisions regarding development, deployment, and employment of nuclear weapons; and that at any time there is an understanding that the authority recognizes the current status of such programs and of the nuclear force. A responsible authority need not actively participate in policy making; it might passively allow a program to proceed. The second critical assumption is that formal or informal statements by recognized official spokesmen of the regime are neither essentially fraudulent nor uncorrelated with policy. Because China has been, and to a great degree remains, a closed society with officially controlled communications, it is necessary to take official public pronouncements as a starting point for investigation. Attempts to obtain or analyze restricted communications and documents are beyond the scope of this paper. One is entitled to assume that a state which goes to great lengths to control its communications, which it presents in the customary manner of states, actually desires to communicate a message. That is, one is entitled to assume that communication itself is governed by a policy, and that this policy governs the manner in which other government policies are communicated. This means that, for instance, official statements about Chinese nuclear policy form recognizable patterns or correlate to actual policy in ways that should be verifiable from other openly available evidence.

Having made these assumptions, it is necessary to state limitations on the scope and nature of this paper. First, all information is obtained from primary or secondary open sources. Analysis is conducted on the basis of accepted standards of scholarship, without recourse to official access to classified information that might confirm or refute openly available information. Second, in line with the assumption that the public statements are meaningful, it is beyond the scope of this paper to conduct sophisticated

content analysis of the statements. The statements will be analyzed on the basis of their overt content, with due respect for the context of the statements. A third limitation is that the search for official statements will be representative, but not exhaustive. Primary sources will consist largely of Chinese statements reproduced in Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS) and Joint Publications Research Service (JPRS) translation services, and in readily available publications such as Beijing Review. Secondary sources will consist largely of those books and periodicals available in the Air University Library. No general attempt will be made to refer to original Chinese-language documents, although the author of this study may do so in exceptional cases or if the translation appears questionable.

#### PREVIOUS STUDIES

The two pioneering Western writers on China's nuclear policies are Morton H. Halperin of Harvard's Center for International Affairs, and the late Alice Langley Hsieh of the Rand Corporation, both writing classic studies in the mid 1960s (70:1). Halperin's China and the Bomb, published in 1965, relates Chinese nuclear policies to Chinese foreign policy, particularly the effects on the United States. Hsieh's Communist China's Strategy in the Nuclear Era, published in 1962, is a historical study of China's reaction to the development of nuclear weapons by the U.S. and the Soviet Union, including early indications of the direction in which China's own nuclear program might lead. Hsieh's subsequent studies documented the development of Chinese nuclear forces up to the time of her death (bibliographic notes in Dolan, 70:18n1).

At the same time Halperin was researching his 1965 book at the Harvard East Asian Research Center, William R. Harris was making use of the facilities to produce his historical study of China's nuclear doctrine during the period 1945-55 (40:--). Halperin relied extensively on Harris's documentation.

While Hsieh remained the scholarly expert on weapons development programs and military policy, a whole group of scholars began to focus on the question of strategic relationships, arms control, and problems of nuclear proliferation. Prominent among the latter category are Halperin himself, who addressed arms control, Hsieh's prolific colleagues Harold C. Hinton, Jonathan D. Pollack, and Harry Harding, at Rand, and Michael Pillsbury writing later; A. Doak Barnett and Ralph N. Clough at the Brookings Institution; Australian scholar Harry G. Gelber; and British scholar Gerald Segal. Pollack continues to write with greater depth of detail on Chinese politico-military policy. Gelber has gone into even greater detail in describing the technical characteristics of China's forces and their relationship to policy (31:--).

There is a whole school of writers specializing in China's armed forces and weapon systems. Among the more prominent and prolific are William W. Whitson, Harlan W. Jencks, Jonathan R. Adelman, William T. Tow, Harvey W. Nelsen, and Bradley Hahn. The last-named is a military journalist based in Hong Kong, well-known as a "China-watcher" specializing in China's military forces and weapons.

Two unpublished studies prepared for the Department of Defense address the subject. The first, prepared by Ronald E. Dolan, covers the period from

the early 1950s through 1983 and relies primarily on Chinese statements to trace "Chinese doctrine and policy on the development and use of nuclear weapons" (70:iii). A subsequent study by Roxane D. V. Sismanidis traces Chinese statements on nuclear weapons and arms control policies, particularly since 1982 (71:--).

This report will have the intent of bringing the picture up through 1987, and attempting to establish a pattern of development in order to allow the reader to form judgments about future directions of Chinese nuclear policy.

#### OBJECTIVES OF THIS STUDY

The central problem addressed in this study is whether major patterns can be identified in the development of China's nuclear policy, and whether any such patterns can be used to predict future trends or contingencies. This problem is of interest in formulating U.S. policy on nuclear weapons and arms control, as well as general U.S. national security policy that may be affected directly or indirectly by interaction with Chinese interests.

The first objective is to conduct a general review of scholarly literature on China's nuclear policy. The more prominent Western scholarly authors will be canvassed. The Soviets are not noted for making a significant body of such literature available in English to the general scholar, but an effort will be made to canvass what is available. Some Chinese scholarly articles are now appearing on this subject, and available Chinese literature will be canvassed.

The second objective is to identify the basis of China's original policy decisions to develop nuclear forces. The question is whether the decisions can be placed within a logical framework of environmental factors and overall patterns of policy behavior by the Chinese. The alternatives range from irrational or capricious policy-making, to non-rational models such as bureaucratic momentum or even random behavior.

The third objective is to identify the basis of China's current policy decisions for employing and improving (or modifying or eliminating) its nuclear forces. It is reasonable to expect a link or logical development between the original policy and present policy. If such a link can be established and sustained in this study, it will tend to confirm the regularity or consistency of patterns of Chinese policy.

Building on such an understanding, if it can be developed, the fourth objective is to predict future trends, or outcomes contingent upon certain conditions. This requires, first of all, the development of an explanatory model that relates past and present behavior to identifiable conditions. Beyond that, the future can be approached in two ways. The first is to project one or more possible paths in which 'conditions' can be anticipated to move, and then apply the model to determine the development of policy over that period. The second is to identify various interesting sets of hypothetical 'conditions' that might occur at moments in the future, and predict the specific Chinese policy responses that can be expected from the model. To sum up, the intent is to be able to predict future Chinese policy either by extrapolating present trends in various ways into the future, or to select specific

the early 1950s through 1983 and relies primarily on Chinese statements to trace "Chinese doctrine and policy on the development and use of nuclear weapons" (70:iii). A subsequent study by Roxane D. V. Sismanidis traces Chinese statements on nuclear weapons and arms control policies, particularly since 1982 (71:--).

This report will have the intent of bringing the picture up through 1987, and attempting to establish a pattern of development in order to allow the reader to form judgments about future directions of Chinese nuclear policy.

#### OBJECTIVES OF THIS STUDY

The central problem addressed in this study is whether major patterns can be identified in the development of China's nuclear policy, and whether any such patterns can be used to predict future trends or contingencies. This problem is of interest in formulating U.S. policy on nuclear weapons and arms control, as well as general U.S. national security policy that may be affected directly or indirectly by interaction with Chinese interests.

The first objective is to conduct a general review of scholarly literature on China's nuclear policy. The more prominent Western scholarly authors will be canvassed. The Soviets are not noted for making a significant body of such literature available in English to the general scholar, but an effort will be made to canvass what is available. Some Chinese scholarly articles are now appearing on this subject, and available Chinese literature will be canvassed.

The second objective is to identify the basis of China's original policy decisions to develop nuclear forces. The question is whether the decisions can be placed within a logical framework of environmental factors and overall patterns of policy behavior by the Chinese. The alternatives range from irrational or capricious policy-making, to non-rational models such as bureaucratic momentum or even random behavior.

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hypothetical conditions and apply the model to predict specific Chinese responses.

The purpose of this study is to prepare a general, unclassified background reference that will provide national-level briefers and analysts with some theoretical basis for the development of Chinese nuclear policies.

## Chapter Two

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Much of scholarly interest in China's nuclear policy has appeared in the West. This study includes an extensive, but not exhaustive, search of non-classified books and periodicals in the Air University Library, along with nonclassified materials available from other sources such as the Library of Congress. This researcher searched the catalogue and appropriate shelves of the AU Library for related books and searched the Public Affairs Information Service Bulletin and Air University Library Index to Military Periodicals from December 1987 back through 1984. Subject-related periodicals were individually searched back into 1983. A few particular periodicals, such as The China Quarterly, were searched back to the early 1960s. Located articles led to retrieval of additional important and frequently-referenced sources. Finally, AU Library microfiche holdings of the Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS) Daily Report for the Soviet Union and for China were reviewed. This researcher reviewed the FBIS China Daily Report for all of 1986 and all available holdings (into May) for 1987. The FBIS Soviet Daily Report was reviewed for 1987 (into May). Earlier FBIS holdings were available to the authors of other studies referenced in this work.

Two unpublished studies prepared for the Department of Defense combine to form a chronological overview of the subject. The first (70:-) covers Chinese nuclear doctrine and policy for the period 1945 through October 1983, largely from Western sources. The second (71:-) covers Chinese nuclear weapons and arms control policies for the period 1982 through 1985, largely from Chinese official sources.

The present study reviews the period of the earlier, unpublished studies, and makes an intensive effort to cover the period since those studies.

### WESTERN STUDIES

Most openly available nonclassified scholarship on Chinese nuclear policy is Western. The best-known and earliest Western writers who conducted sustained, scholarly studies of the problem are Morton H. Halperin of the Harvard University Center for International Affairs, and the late Alice Langley Hsieh of the Rand Corporation.

Halperin's work, beginning with China and the Bomb in 1965, relates China's nuclear policy to Chinese foreign policy, in the context of international relations. The research problem for Halperin was to determine and predict how China's nuclear policy would affect U.S. foreign policy interests,

particularly U.S. interests in arms control and disarmament. The latest of Halperin's work reviewed for this study appeared in 1966 (37:--). Halperin relied extensively upon Harris's historical study of Chinese nuclear doctrine, 1945-55 (40:--). The Harris study focused upon China's response to U.S. and Soviet nuclear capabilities.

The late Alice Langley Hsieh, a senior analyst at the Rand Corporation, produced the classic study on Communist China's Strategy in the Nuclear Era (9:--) in 1962. This study focused on adjustments of China's foreign and defense policy in response to U.S. and Soviet nuclear policies, and China's program to acquire a nuclear capability. She stressed Chinese calculations of the role of nuclear weapons in China's national security. Additional writings reviewed here date from 1963 and were originally published in 1964. They focused on Chinese military doctrine as evidenced in internal military publications captured in the Sino-Indian War (42:--) and a Chinese critique of Soviet nuclear doctrine and arms control policy (10:--). The latest of her writings reviewed here is a 1971 article on "China's Nuclear-Missile Programme: Regional or Intercontinental?" (41:--), written while she worked for the Institute for Defense Analyses. Her conclusion from the fragmentary and contradictory evidence available at the time was that China's priority then was its regional nuclear capability.

Rand produced analyses by a number of other scholars, beginning with the period of Hsieh's work there. Harold C. Hinton (not reviewed here), Jonathan D. Pollack, Harry Harding, Richard H. Solomon, and William Whitson wrote on the strategic relationship between the United States, the Soviet Union, and China. Michael Pillsbury addressed Chinese views of SALT and the U.S.-Soviet strategic balance.

At the Brookings Institution, A. Doak Barnett, Ralph N. Clough (not reviewed here), and Harry Harding studied China's strategic policy and its relationship to the U.S. and other powers. Harding's previous study on Chinese foreign policy (39:--) was reviewed for this study.

Yuan-li Wu has researched similar questions for the Hoover Institution and the American Enterprise Institute.

Among the best-known China military watchers who address China's nuclear forces have been William W. Whitson, Harlan W. Jencks, William T. Tow, Harvey W. Nelsen, and Bradley Hahn. Hahn is a military journalist based in Hong Kong. Two other Western scholars have produced a number of important studies. Australian scholar Harry G. Gelber has written on China's nuclear strategy (31:--) and China in the strategic balance (32:--; 30:--). British scholar Gerald Segal has written extensively on Chinese power and the strategic balance (19:--; 57:--; 61:--), the Chinese element in arms control (56:--; 54:--), Sino-Soviet relations (55:--; 60:--; 58:--; 59:--), and the determinants of the nuclear strategies of the U.S., the Soviet Union, and China (61:--). Both of these authors provide detailed information on China's nuclear forces.

Not specifically addressed here are numerous and important scholarly works on Chinese foreign policy in general.

This study will update and pull together information on China's nuclear policies and attempt to provide an explanatory model that can be used for prediction.

#### SOVIET STUDIES

Chinese nuclear policy is not a principal subject of generally available Soviet scholarship. Review of the AU Library catalogue produced four book-length studies. Soviet historian Roy Medvedev's China and the Superpowers (15:--) addressed relations between China and the superpowers but did not devote special emphasis to the implications of China's nuclear program and capabilities. Soviet official commentators "O. B. Borisov" and "B. T. Koloskov" (pseudonymous bylines) addressed Chinese nuclear policies only in the most indirect manner, by relating Soviet technological assistance agreements (e.g.: 2:82), and Chinese denunciations of Soviet arms control agreements with the West (e.g.: 2:225ff). Specific references to China's atomic bomb program consisted of complaints that China timed its first nuclear test to coincide with official Soviet notification that anti-Chinese Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev had been removed from power (2:254) and that China publicized a subsequent test during an important visit to Moscow by Zhou Enlai (2:256). The implication is that China meant to "remind the Soviet Union (ibid.). the PRC leaders intended dealing with them from a position of strength"

Raymond L. Garthoff edited and contributed to a collection of Western studies of Sino-Soviet military relations (5:--). His own chapters, in particular (esp. 3:--; and 4:--), are based upon study of Soviet sources. He included his translation of the full text of "The Peking Version of 'Total Strategy'", an October 1963 article by I. I. Yermashhev, which appeared in the restricted-circulation Soviet General Staff journal Voennaya mysl' (23:--). The article attacks the ideological basis of the Chinese doctrine of "People's War", specifically pointing to Mao's alleged indifference to the enormous casualties of a nuclear war (23:245). The thrust of the Soviet writings cited by Garthoff is to portray China as an irresponsible power that would undertake a reckless and adventuristic foreign policy backed by its nuclear forces.

Morris Rothenberg's extensive study of Soviet source materials (18:--) produced Soviet comments (usually indirect, attributed to non-Soviet sources) on China's nuclear capability. The Soviet sources did not include what Westerners would consider an objective study of Chinese nuclear policies.

A search of the Soviet journal International Affairs from 1987 back into 1983 yielded no scholarly study of Chinese nuclear policy, although it did yield occasional Soviet foreign policy statements on China. Likewise, a search of the FBIS Daily Report: Soviet Union for 1987 through May yielded not a single article analyzing China's overall nuclear policy or strategy.

#### CHINESE STUDIES

There are relatively few comprehensive articles available representing

Chinese scholarship; what is available mostly represents Chinese positions on nuclear disarmament and justifications for China's nuclear force. A search of the AU Library catalogue yielded no Chinese-authored books on Chinese nuclear policy. Marshal Nie Rongzhen's memoirs were not available either in English or Chinese, except for the excerpt in Beijing Review discussing the critical decisions and reasons for acquiring nuclear weapons (46:--).

Several prominent Chinese foreign policy officials appear frequently in print. Huan Xiang, national security advisor to the PRC State Council, frequently writes on particular issues of Chinese national security policy. Many of these articles are available in the West either through FBIS translations or through publication in prestigious Western journals such as Foreign Affairs. These articles typically explain and defend Chinese positions on issues such as U.S.-Taiwan relations or nuclear disarmament. Ambassador Han Xu has written on issues in Sino-American relations, for instance, nuclear technology transfer (38:--). Policy statements by key public officials such as Party General Secretary and former Premier Zhao Ziyang, and Deputy Foreign Minister Qian Qichen (disarmament matters) receive extensive coverage in the Chinese press. These statements are usually carried in Beijing Review and frequently reprinted by FBIS.

A formerly restricted source has now become generally available. Jiefangjun Bao (Liberation Army Daily--LAD) opened to general subscription in 1987. This is the official newspaper of the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) General Political Department. It was never "classified", and was usually available to some non-Chinese researchers with good connections. Important articles of general interest usually were reprinted by other Chinese news media. Now, with the open availability of the entire paper, many articles of specialized appeal are available. One article of particular interest discussed Chinese nuclear strategy at some length (36:--).

An indirect but generally revealing source of Chinese thinking is the pro-PRC press based in Hong Kong. A number of Hong Kong papers and news services are either affiliated with the PRC or have excellent PRC sources. Among these are the Zhongguo Tongxun She (China News Service), the Ta Kung Pao, and the Wen Wei Po. These outlets carry stories with greater detail and more candid background information than is usually found in the drier official PRC press. In addition, some PRC publications such as the Party Central Committee news and commentary magazine Liaowang (Outlook Weekly) publish Hong Kong editions that have a more candid editorial policy and offer more revealing background information.

China's decade-old policy of "opening up" to the outside world has led to greater and more open discussion of policy issues. This is both helpful and confusing. In the past, frank comment and debate was kept within restricted circles. What appeared in the open press, therefore, generally represented approved policy, or at least (during the Cultural Revolution) the policy line of the faction that controlled those particular publications. Today, however, what appears in the public press is not necessarily authoritative or settled policy. Thus, articles on military affairs may sometimes represent critical views, original scholarship, particular opinion or interpretation, new proposals, or an extended debate. As the "opening up" becomes institutionalized, the researcher can expect to see more information shedding light on the process and purpose behind Chinese policy.

## Chapter Three

### CHINESE NUCLEAR POLICY: DEVELOPMENT OF A CAPABILITY

China exploded its first atomic device on 16 October 1964. On 25 October 1966, China successfully conducted a test of an atomic warhead delivered on a Chinese-built ballistic missile. Four months earlier, 1 July 1966, Premier Zhou Enlai had formally inaugurated the "Second Artillery Corps", the strategic guided missile arm of the Chinese PLA (35:--). This chapter will review China's nuclear policy prior to the achievement of an active nuclear capability, and will analyze key policy decisions.

#### CHINESE PRONOUNCEMENTS PRIOR TO 1965-1966

High-level Chinese pronouncements prior to 1965 or 1966 (the initial activation of China's nuclear force) gradually shifted to reflect the justification and utility of a Chinese nuclear force. Chinese pronouncements commonly dealt in generalities and platitudes, even in proposals for disarmament (49:247).

Immediately after the surrender of Japan in 1945, Mao Zedong confronted the question of the decisiveness of the atom bomb in warfare. He denied that it was the two atom bombs alone that caused Japan to surrender, giving that credit to the entry of the Soviet Union into the war. "Some of our comrades, too, believe that the atom bomb is all-powerful; that is a big mistake" (14:Vol.4:21). "The theory that 'weapons decide everything', the purely military viewpoint, a bureaucratic style of work divorced from the masses, individualist thinking, and the like--all these are bourgeois influences in our ranks. We must constantly sweep these bourgeois things out of our ranks just as we sweep out dust" (14:Vol.4:22). In his famous interview of August 1946 with Anna Louise Strong, Mao asserted that the U.S. was preparing to attack the Soviet Union but would not succeed, even with the atom bomb. "The atom bomb is a paper tiger which the U.S. reactionaries use to scare people. It looks terrible, but in fact it isn't. Of course, the atom bomb is a weapon of mass slaughter, but the outcome of a war is decided by the people, not by one or two new types of weapons" (14:Vol.4:100).

Harris traced Chinese statements from 1945 to 1955 for evidence of nuclear doctrine (40:--). He found that until the Korean War the Chinese joined the Soviets in minimizing the decisiveness of nuclear weapons and emphasizing the power of "the people" (40:88-89). Even after the first Soviet test in 1949, the Chinese addressed the Soviet announcement itself, declaring it to be "a heavy blow to the instigators of atomic war. Thus it is clear that

we [the "Socialist Camp"] will certainly have sufficient strength to pulverise all the criminal plots of the warmongers...." (Radio Peking, International Service in English Morse to North America, 4 October 1949, cited in 40:89).

During the Korean War, as Harris observed, the Chinese began to consider nuclear war as a more immediate danger to themselves and began to weigh their vulnerability (40:90-91). Harris traced an evolution of Chinese doctrine that led from reliance on Soviet deterrence and denial of the tactical usefulness of nuclear weapons, in late 1950, through an appreciation of the effectiveness of thermonuclear weapons and U.S. development of tactical weapons in late 1954, to hints in early 1955 that China was considering development of nuclear weapons (40:90-92). Beginning in late 1954 and extending into early 1955, China announced a series of steps, including reorganization of the PLA, organization of basic scientific research, and a series of agreements with the Soviets, that laid the foundations for what would become a nuclear weapons program (40:94-95).

In the period of the Moscow meetings of Soviet and Chinese political and military leaders, that is, from October 1957 to early 1958, Chinese public statements expressed great optimism about acquiring "the most-advanced Soviet military technology", "with a reduction of roundabout ways" (series of statements cited by Ford, 29:161-62). The PLA also published a draft training program that gave prominence to "modern military techniques" and "combat under the modern conditions of atom bombs" to be "ready at all times to deal with any emergence" (29:162). This program, reminiscent of Khrushchev's arguments that nuclear weapons and guided missiles completely changed the rules of warfare, was superseded in March and April 1958 by a denunciation of "dogmatism" by senior Chinese commanders and calls for China to develop its own nuclear weapons and to rely on "mobilization of the masses" (29:162-63).

Hsieh speculated that Sino-Soviet agreements in 1954-1955 may have been made with a view toward a Chinese nuclear weapons program (9:48). She cited Zhou Enlai's 14 January 1956 speech to intellectuals as calling for a nuclear program with military applications (9:58-59). In June and July 1957, Chinese Defense Minister Peng Dehuai reportedly suggested confidence that the Soviets would provide China with nuclear weapons in case of attack, knowing also that the Soviets had developed intercontinental ballistic missiles capable of reaching the United States (9:63). Hsieh cited Mao's speeches in Moscow after the first Soviet Sputnik launches in October and November 1957, to show that the Chinese believed the world had reached a "turning point" in the East-West balance, the the East now prevailed, and that it should aggressively but carefully exploit its strategic advantage (9:84-88). She argued, however, that the Chinese rejected the existence of "mutual deterrence", because of a need to avoid complacency and strengthen further the "forces of peace" (9:81-83).

During this time China's policy on nuclear arms control was similar to that of the Soviet Union, emphasizing General and Complete Disarmament (GCD), until 1958. In late 1957 the Soviets approved the "Rapacki Plan" for a nuclear-free zone in Central Europe, which the Chinese approved with the suggestion it also be applied to the Middle East (9:103-04). Chinese

spokesmen indicated approval of extension of this principle to Asia, provided that it be part of an overall program to eliminate nuclear weapons completely; otherwise, China would acquire its own nuclear weapons (9:104-08). The Chinese did not, however, endorse Khrushchev's 4 April 1958 proposal to end all nuclear tests at once, and by that time had apparently decided to pursue their own nuclear program (9:107-08). On 16 May 1958, Guo Mojo announced that Chinese scientists were "determined to launch a Chinese-made artificial satellite as early as possible" (cited in 9:111), indicating China had also decided to develop its own intercontinental ballistic missile capability. On 23 May 1958, PLA Air Force Commander Liu Yalou wrote that China would develop its own atomic bombs, aircraft, and rockets, and that this would represent "a new turning point in the international situation" (cited in 9:112).

China broke decisively with the Soviet Union over the issue of the Partial Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (PNTBT) negotiations in 1962-63. When the U.S.S.R., the U.S., and the U.K. signed the treaty in 1963, the Chinese publicly attacked the Soviet Union for signing the treaty and participated in a series of mutual public recriminations that became known as the Polemic on the General Line of the International Communist Movement (17:--). The PNTBT was seen by the Chinese as an abandonment of Soviet obligations to the "Socialist Camp" and an attempt to subordinate bloc interests to Soviet security through a program of "all-around co-operation" with the West (17:32). The Soviets, as the Chinese side of the Polemic indicated, had done more than simply isolate the Chinese (who had not yet developed the capability of underground testing and had not even conducted their first nuclear test); they had sold out the entire Socialist Camp and the World Communist Movement. The Chinese insisted that a correct policy of "peaceful coexistence" would "oppose the imperialist policies of aggression and war" and "support and assist the revolutionary struggles of all the oppressed peoples and nations" (17:33) in line with the realization that "the transition from capitalism to socialism in any country can only be brought about through the proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat in that country" (17:32, emphasis added). The Chinese denied the Soviet position that it was necessary to suppress the revolutionary struggles of oppressed peoples or fail to oppose "imperialist aggression" on the grounds that a "spark" could ignite a nuclear war that would destroy mankind. On the other hand, the Chinese subtly shifted the burden of revolution onto the various "oppressed peoples and nations" and indicated no eagerness to spread communism by outside force.

China put forth its own arms control proposal in 1963: prohibition of nuclear weapons and their use; removal of overseas bases, establishment of nuclear-free zones, non-transfer of nuclear weapons or technology, and banning of tests; and a global conference to ban and eliminate nuclear weapons (cited in Halperin, 7:66-67, from Peking Review, Vol. 6, No. 31 (2 August 1963), p. 8, and Vol. 6, No. 32 (9 August 1963), p. 7). Immediately following its first nuclear test on 16 October 1964, China declared that its test was "a major achievement of the Chinese people in the strengthening of their national defence and safeguarding of their motherland, as well as a major contribution made by the Chinese people to the cause of the defence of world peace" (cited in Halperin, 7:84, and in Peking Review, Vol. 7, No. 42 (special supplement, 16 October 1964), p. iii). The Chinese argued their need to oppose U.S. "nuclear blackmail" and "to break the nuclear monopoly of the nuclear powers

and to eliminate nuclear weapons" (7:84-86). The following day Premier Zhou Enlai sent a letter to all heads of government restating China's position on disarmament, stating that "China's mastering of nuclear weapons is entirely for defence and for protecting the Chinese people from the U.S. nuclear threat," and adding that "at no time and in no circumstances will China be the first to use nuclear weapons" (cited in Halperin, 7:91-92, and in Peking Review, 23 October 1964, p. 6).

#### CHINESE RETROSPECTIVE PRONOUNCEMENTS

Recent retrospective Chinese coverage has added additional detail and comment, but has edited the historical record. As has been seen, China publicized the important points of its nuclear policy from time to time, as events developed. It is interesting to look at Chinese retrospective coverage of the period up to 1965-66 to gain additional insight into the actual decisions and their background. Two of the most important retrospective sources are The Polemic on the General Line and Mao's report On the Ten Major Relationships, both published after many of the key events took place. Additional retrospectives have appeared from time to time, notably on key anniversaries.

The Polemic on the General Line makes public an astonishing exchange of criticism between the two Communist giants--the Soviet Union and China, who were formally allies at the time. In the context of negotiation of the Partial Nuclear Test Ban Treaty in 1962-63, Sino-Soviet relations broke down on virtually every issue of discussion. Among China's complaints against the Soviets was the charge that "the Soviets had bullied and betrayed China":

In 1958 the leadership of the CPSU put forward unreasonable demands designed to bring China under Soviet military control. These unreasonable demands were rightly and firmly rejected by the Chinese Government. Not long afterwards, in June 1959, the Soviet Government unilaterally tore up the agreement on new technology for national defence concluded between China and the Soviet Union in October 1957, and refused to provide China with a sample of an atomic bomb and technical data concerning its manufacture. (17:77)

The Chinese complained repeatedly to the Soviets after being informed in August 1962 that the Soviets were prepared to sign the PNTBT: "This was a joint Soviet-U.S. plot to monopolize nuclear weapons in an attempt to deprive China of the right to possess nuclear weapons to resist the U.S. nuclear threat" (17:96). On 14 July 1963, while a Chinese mission was negotiating in Moscow, the Soviets published a polemic attack on China and shortly thereafter signed the PNTBT "in open betrayal of the interests of the Soviet people, the people in the socialist camp, and the peace-loving people of the world" (17:98). Denying Soviet charges that the Chinese welcomed a nuclear world-war, China accused the Soviet Union of "nuclear fetishism" and outlined its own policy statement on 19 November 1963:

We have always maintained that the socialist countries must achieve and maintain nuclear superiority. Only this can prevent the imperialists from launching a nuclear war and help bring about the complete prohibition of nuclear weapons.

We consistently hold that in the hands of a socialist country, nuclear weapons must always be defensive weapons for resisting imperialist nuclear threats. A socialist country absolutely must not be the first to use nuclear weapons, nor would it in any circumstances play with them or engage in nuclear blackmail and nuclear gambling. . . . The leaders of the CPSU admit that there is often no clear battle line between the two sides in national liberation wars and civil wars, and therefore the use of nuclear weapons is out of the question. (17:246-47)

Mao Zedong made an important speech on "The Ten Major Relationships" on 25 April 1956 to an "enlarged meeting" of the Political Bureau of the Party Central Committee. Published during the Cultural Revolution in the 1960s, it included an implied decision to produce nuclear weapons:

We will have not only more planes and artillery but atom bombs too. If we are not to be bullied in the present-day world, we cannot do without the bomb. Then what is to be done about it? One reliable way is to cut military and administrative expenditures down to appropriate proportions and increase expenditures on economic construction. Only with the faster growth of economic construction can there be greater progress in defence construction. (14:Vol.5:288)

Marshal Nie Rongzhen succeeded Marshal Chen Yi as head of the national program for defense scientific and technological development from 1956 to 1966. In his memoirs, excerpted in April 1985, Marshal Nie described the course of decisions and development that led to China's nuclear weapons capability (46:--). According to Nie, Vice-Premier Li Fuchun, visiting Moscow in August 1956, presented a request for aid with China's missile research. In September the Soviets offered only to train 50 Chinese personnel. Nie then proposed to the Central Committee and Central Military Commission that China "start our own preparations for research to develop missiles, atom bombs, new fighter planes, and other sophisticated weapons, while striving to continue the negotiations with the Soviet Union, trying everything possible to get help" (46:15). Nie continued, stating that "after October 1956 Soviet leader Nikita Khruschev showed some signs of flexibility in offering technological aid" (46:16). Nie went to Moscow in September 1957 to negotiate and on 15 October signed an agreement for Soviet aid "in such new technologies as rockets and aviation" (*ibid.*). Things went "smoothly through 1957 and 1958 . . . although the Soviets only supplied us with a few outdated missiles, airplanes and material samples of military equipment, along with the relevant technological material and some experts" (*ibid.*). In January 1960 Nie reported his apprehensions over the "unreliability" of continued Soviet aid and his irritation that "the Soviets keep us in check on the key points of important technologies" (46:16-17). Soviet experts, indeed, were withdrawn by August. In the summer of 1960, Mao and Zhou approved Nie's recommendation for a self-reliant Chinese science and technology program. With the economic collapse after the failure of the Great Leap Forward in 1961, Nie recommended against slowing down the weapons program. In his own opinion: "To get rid of imperialist bullying, which China had suffered for more than a century, we had to develop these sophisticated weapons. At least then, we could effectively counterattack if China were subject to imperialist nuclear attack" (46:17). Nie reported that "Chen Yi said that even if we had to pawn our pants, China was still determined

to make its own sophisticated weapons. He told me humorously many times that as foreign minister he still felt he couldn't straighten his back. If China could make the missiles and atom bombs, then he would have strong backing" (46:18). The first atom bomb test took place successfully on 16 October 1964. Nie recounted the reactions to Zhou Enlai's official report to the National People's Congress the next day: "The superpowers' nuclear monopoly and their attempts at atomic blackmail had failed. The Chinese people would never submit to nuclear pressure. It was also a great victory for the Party's line of self-reliance" (46:19, emphasis added). Nie directed the nuclear missile test on 25 October 1966: "I witnessed the successful launching . . . After the launch, I went to the atom bomb test base to see the results of the explosion at the designated target. . . . [China] had long been backward but now had its own sophisticated weapons" (46:19). He also directed the first hydrogen bomb test on 14 June 1967.

#### THE INTERNATIONAL AND DOMESTIC ENVIRONMENT

Political scientist James C. Hsiung recommends adopting "a contextual approach" to the study of Chinese foreign policy, based upon "a global view" and a "reactive model" (11:4). China's policy decisions and actions become clearer when related to important domestic and international events.

Alice Langley Hsieh devoted a chapter to the subject of "Growing [Chinese] Awareness of Nuclear Warfare" during the period from 1954 to mid-1957 (9: Ch. 2). She pointed out a number of developments that were coming together to affect Chinese policy makers: increasing evidence of U.S. development of tactical nuclear weapons; the 1953-54 Malenkov-Khrushchev debate over pure deterrence vs. nuclear war-fighting capability as a Soviet deterrent posture (pure deterrence implied a pure Soviet-centered orientation; war-fighting implied a more extensive Soviet nuclear umbrella); growing apprehension over the 1954 Eisenhower-Dulles "New Look" defense program, which was based on nuclear "massive retaliation" and was implemented by stationing nuclear forces around the periphery of China and the U.S.S.R.; a regular Chinese state structure and military organization being established in 1954 after the Civil War and Korean War, accompanied by a program of economic restructuring and development; and China's renewed program for the "liberation of Taiwan" in 1954-55. Hsieh might also have pointed out the PRC still was handicapped in its conduct of international relations by being excluded from the United Nations and by having diplomatic relations with only a few Western nations.

When the Chinese decided on acquiring nuclear weapons, Mao's insistence on corresponding economies in defense expenditures ("On the Ten Major Relationships") forced an examination of a series of questions. First, would the Soviet deterrent umbrella be used to protect China? This question was open to interpretation. The Chinese backed down with minimal gains in the first Taiwan Straits crisis (1954-55) but became convinced they could press the issue without significant risk of war with the U.S. (12:154). Allegedly the Soviets were so fearful of the U.S. nuclear threat that they were prepared to back down in Hungary in 1956, until the Chinese insisted the Soviets "smash the counter-revolutionary rebellion" (17:69). The lesson for the Chinese appeared to be that nuclear weapons did indeed deter the U.S. from entering

a nuclear war with the Soviets, but need not deter the Soviets--or their allies--from using conventional force to achieve their national and ideological goals. The second question was whether the Soviets would directly transfer nuclear weapons and delivery systems to China, along with the technology for operation and manufacture. The Chinese were apparently optimistic on this point by mid-1957, according to Marshal Nie's and other similar accounts. The third important question was cost, related to a fourth question about how nuclear weapons would figure in the issue of reorganization and doctrinal modernization of the People's Liberation Army. The "Major Relationship" between economic development and military modernization appeared to dictate that one would have to yield to the other in the short term, and that the only way to have sustained military modernization across the board would be to concentrate first on modernizing the basic economy. Here, Mao implied that a conventional demobilization could be compensated by possession of nuclear weapons, reminiscent of the "New Look", but begging the question of the imminence of the nuclear threat to China in the meantime. Here returns the question of the Soviet nuclear umbrella and Mao's calculation that the U.S. would not use nuclear weapons against China for the foreseeable future. In summary, it appears that Mao calculated that nuclear weapons would provide a degree of immunity to U.S. nuclear threats, but that the Soviets refused to recognize the potential of the Soviet nuclear umbrella. Therefore, China must obtain its own nuclear weapons in order to be free to conduct its own security policy--including eventual liberation of Taiwan.

Khrushchev's pursuit of detente with the Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations only confirmed his Soviet-centeredness and weakness, and his unreliability as an ally of China. Harold Ford observed that at the very time the Chinese were led to expect transfers of Soviet nuclear weapons technology (late 1957 to early 1958), Khrushchev was vigorously pursuing detente with the West. The Soviet offer of a nuclear test ban announced on 4 April 1958 contained a warning: "If the tests are not stopped now, within a certain time other countries may have nuclear weapons, and in such a situation it would, of course, be much more difficult to obtain an agreement" (29:165). Of course, France was also engaged in a nuclear program at the time, and Khrushchev was convinced the U.S. intended to supply West Germany with nuclear weapons.

Hsieh attempted to place another puzzling incident in context (10:165-68). As part of the Polemic launched in 1963, the Chinese claimed that "in 1958 the leadership of the CPSU put forward unreasonable demands designed to bring Chinese under Soviet military control" (10:166). Hsieh joined widespread speculation that this referred either to Soviet refusal to back China in the 1958 Taiwan Straits crisis, or--even more sinister--to reported Soviet proposals for a joint naval command, a joint air defense command, joint control of nuclear weapons, Soviet bases on Chinese territory, or even Soviet nuclear weapons based in China. Because of the later date of the Straits crisis (August-September 1958), it may be that was not the issue the Chinese complaint referred to; and the Chinese also complained explicitly about lack of Soviet support in the Straits crisis. The cause of the complaint may have taken place before the May 1958 kickoff of the "Great Leap Forward", which was designed, among other things, to undertake rapid economic transformation that would form the basis for future military modernization on an independent basis (29:166). This seems to argue that the Chinese went into the Great Leap

already doubting they would receive the weapons or technology unencumbered from the Soviets, explaining Marshal Chen Yi's May 1958 remarks that China would have the atomic bomb sooner or later, even while supporting the Rapacki Plan and an Asian "atom-free zone".

The reported 20 June 1959 Soviet repudiation of the 15 October 1957 "secret agreement" also stands in a larger context. According to Keesing's,

This reversal of policy, which was deeply resented by the Chinese and contributed to bring about the fall of Marshal Peng Teh-huai, was apparently motivated by Mr. Khrushchev's desire to achieve a rapprochement with the U.S.A., by his plan for an atom-free zone in the Far East, and by his distrust of the increasingly bellicose tendencies of China's foreign policy. A Chinese broadcast of Aug. 15, 1963, which first revealed details of the agreement, asserted that its repudiation was intended "as a gift for the Soviet leader to take to Eisenhower when visiting the U.S.A. in September." (13:19)

Hsieh described the sequence of actions from her knowledge as of 1962 (before the Chinese made the "agreement" and its "repudiation" public) (9:155-66). According to her chronology, Khrushchev not only refused to back China after the failure of the late summer 1958 Taiwan Straits crisis, but on 27 January 1959 he bypassed the Rapacki Plan (nuclear-free zone and conventional force reductions in Central Europe) to propose "an atom-free zone in the Far East and the entire Pacific basin area". Chinese Defense Minister Peng Dehuai undertook a military good-will mission to Eastern Europe from late April to early June 1959 (9:155), following which the 20 June Soviet "repudiation" took place. According to Hsieh, Peng's purpose was to raise the profile of Soviet deterrence in support of the foreign policy goals of the members of a unified "socialist camp" (9:162), and he may have received Khrushchev's response that unless an Asian "atom-free zone" actually came about, the most China could expect in response to basing of U.S. nuclear forces in Asia would be similar Soviet forces in China (9:162-64). Hsieh cited a Life magazine report (13 July 1959, pp. 33-36) that Khrushchev told Averell Harriman Russia had shipped "numerous rockets" to China for installation opposite Taiwan, without specifying their nature or control (9:164).

By 1962-63 the Soviet position on the PNTBT became the focus and symbol of the entire range of policy differences between China and the Soviet Union (see 62:164-65). By that time the Soviets had "let China down" twice in the Taiwan Straits, apparently offered military assistance "with strings" in 1958, "failed to provide nuclear weapons", denounced the Great Leap Forward (1958-61), withdrawn technical assistance (by August 1960), proposed an Asian nuclear-free zone that would bind China, armed and backed India in a war against China (1962), and proposed a treaty that would allow only underground nuclear tests (which China regarded as an attempt to maintain a superpower monopoly of nuclear weapons (62:165), in light of the fact that China did not conduct its first underground test until 23 September 1969 (49:271) and apparently was unable to do so before that time). All this was set against a background of what China saw as Soviet "great-power chauvinism" and disregard for the interests of the members of the Socialist Camp in order to reach a selfish detente with the U.S. The Chinese proceeded with their nuclear weapons and missile programs.

Seen from a Chinese point of view, the Khrushchev years (1953-64, the ten years preceding China's own nuclear detonation in 1964) demonstrated that reliance on the Soviet Union was not an adequate substitute for an independent nuclear capability. The Soviet Union would neither extend its own deterrent umbrella to cover security objectives important to China (such as the recover of Taiwan and protection from a hostile U.S.), nor assist a bloc ally as important as China in acquiring an autonomous nuclear force. The Soviets appeared unwilling even to acquiesce in self-reliant Chinese nuclear weapons and missile programs. Instead, they opposed and attempted to obstruct those programs, even to the extent of "colluding" with the U.S. in arms control agreements intended to restrict acquisition of nuclear weapons by additional countries. The Chinese saw the Khrushchev period in a sinister light. They apparently believed Khrushchev was gradually selling out the interests of communism--in the Soviet Union and in the Soviet bloc--through unwarranted fear of the U.S. and in order to promote purely Soviet interests. Khrushchev appeared unwilling to allow bloc members to pursue independent national policies, particularly where they might conflict with his policy of accommodation with the U.S. Not only did the Chinese see Khrushchev's policies as ideologically unacceptable, they saw them as dangerous to the security of the non-Soviet members of the bloc. The Chinese internal debate over security and ideological issues resulted in increasing determination to acquire an independent nuclear capability.

#### A MODEL FOR CHINESE POLICY

Two factors appear to correlate with the history of Chinese pronouncements: China's constant objective of being recognized as a major power, and the status of China's relations with the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. (including Chinese perceptions of the status of U.S.-Soviet relations). In order to build a model for Chinese policy, it is necessary determine causal relationships and the way they operate. China's policies appear to proceed from the desire for recognition as a major power and from analysis of the status of relations among the U.S., the U.S.S.R., and China. The mechanism that turns these inputs into policy can be characterized by rational calculation of state interest. It appears to operate through power balancing, in which China attempts to adjust relationships among itself, the U.S., and the U.S.S.R.. Chinese nuclear policy appears designed to serve as an instrument of its state policy. A brief examination of the "ideology" issue follows.

Analysts of China's foreign policy face the same contrived dilemma as analysts of Soviet foreign policy: whether the foreign policy of a Communist state is determined by "ideology" or by "state interest". A number of Western authors have approached that problem. Two examples, among many, shed some light. Peter Van Ness (22:-) measured Chinese foreign policy outputs and correlated them to recipient-state relations categorized as either supportive or not supportive of China, and to whether the recipient state was classified as progressive or reactionary. Van Ness found the greatest correlation was between Chinese support for revolutionary movements, and official hostility of the target state toward China. Furthermore, his study covered the years 1965-1966, the beginning and the peak of the ideologically feverish Cultural Revolution. Van Ness found that "actual Chinese behavior in foreign relations

evidenced no greater concern for the welfare of foreign peoples and revolutionary movements than it had in the period before the cultural revolution began" (22:249). His empirical findings supported the position that "entirely different conditions apply in international relations than in domestic politics. The special context of international politics demands a commitment to state self-interest if societies are to survive" (22:250).

J. D. Armstrong (1:-) attempted to finesse a definition of "state self interest" by combining it with ideology in the Marxist concept of "United Front Doctrine". The ideological basis of United Front Doctrine, Contradiction Theory, is found frequently in Mao's writings, for instance "The Role of the Chinese Communist Party in the National War" (October 1938, 14:Vol.2:195-217) and "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People" (27 February 1957, 14:Vol.5:384-421). Mao's contradiction theory allowed the identification of the "principal", "antagonistic" contradiction at a given time, and the mobilization of all other elements in a united front against the principal enemy. The theory is dynamic, allowing for shifts in relative criticality among various relationships. Thus, a given relationship could develop into the "principal" contradiction, could be resolved to some degree through "united front" activity, and could be supplanted by another relationship as the "principal" contradiction. Armstrong related the emergence of the United Front Doctrine as a Chinese foreign policy strategy in 1960 with the development of the Sino-Soviet split (1:238). He went on to state that, in addition to ideological convictions, "it is also derived from power calculations in the context of the Sino-Soviet dispute" (1:239).

In the course of this study the conclusion begins to emerge that China's foreign policy is primarily dictated by rational calculations of China's state interest, that is, achieving the power to establish and maintain a favorable international environment for China's economic development. In other words, China employs its nuclear policies as a means to become "a rich and powerful socialist society" (traditional Chinese formulation: "a wealthy and powerful China"). The Chinese expect to employ their nuclear forces as an instrument of a security policy that is based on the strategy of power balancing. In support of this idea is an article in a 1987 issue of Liberation Army Daily, addressing "Views on Medium-Sized Nuclear Powers' Nuclear Strategy":

The strategic nuclear theory serves a dual purpose. On the one hand, it is the theoretical basis for formulating a nuclear war strategy and belongs to the category of military strategic theory; on the other hand, it is a major component in the state security strategy and belongs to the category of the state security strategic theory because it has a direct influence on the state strategy. (68:K 29)

## Chapter Four

### CHINESE NUCLEAR POLICY: POSSESSION OF A CAPABILITY

High-level Chinese pronouncements since 1965 or 1966 consistently seek to project a sense of responsibility as a nuclear power, and move increasingly closer to negotiable positions on disarmament. During this period China has been developing its nuclear forces and its conventional forces to deter war by presenting the capability to operate successfully in war.

#### CHINESE PRONOUNCEMENTS SINCE 1965-1966

Chinese pronouncements have become increasingly detailed, including indirect or isolated references to nuclear strategy and doctrine. Oran R. Young, in a 1966 article (66:--) reviewed Chinese public comment on nuclear weapons issues from the time of the 16 October 1964 nuclear test. He noted that by the time of the second Chinese test, 14 May 1965, the Chinese had become silent on the question of nuclear proliferation, in contrast to their previous arguments justifying their "breaking of the nuclear monopoly" and a nation's sovereign right to acquire nuclear weapons (66:146-47). In the early period after the first test, Young observed, Chinese pronouncements "downplayed the utility of nuclear weapons", made no comment about a shift in the "balance of military power in the Far East", and continued to call for disarmament (66:147-48). He attributed to the Chinese a fear of a U.S. attack (66:148), during the period before China's forces reached any level of development. The new Chinese position on proliferation appeared to indicate that China's acquisition of nuclear weapons was sufficient: a statement by Liu Shaoqi on 30 October 1964 claimed that "all oppressed nations and peoples and all peace-loving countries and people have felt elated over the successful explosion of China's first atom bomb, as they hold the view that they, too, have nuclear weapons" (Peking Radio, cited in 66:148). After the second atomic test, in May 1965, the Chinese returned to the theme of the desirability of nuclear proliferation for the "Afro-Asian countries", while adding symbolically that "the just struggle of Afro-Asian countries against imperialism and colonialism is the best atom bomb" and asserting that "as for the request for China's help in the manufacture of atom bombs, the question is not realistic" (Chen Yi, 29 September 1965, cited in 66:151-52).

China's position on the 1968 Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) was just as negative as on the 1963 PNTB Treaty. During the negotiation of the NPT, from 1966 through 1968, China consistently denounced it as a collusion by the U.S. and the Soviet Union to establish a nuclear "hegemony" or "monopoly" of nuclear weapons (49:258-59, and see extensive reporting of the Chinese statements in

16:--). China continues to maintain the position that the NPT is an "unequal treaty", because of the special status it gives to the major nuclear powers, but that China is not involved in proliferation (50:7). China now calls for a complete ban on nuclear tests (*ibid.*).

China consistently opposed the SALT I negotiations (1967-72), although on different grounds over the period (see 16:--). Pillsbury noted that the Chinese saw the June 1967 summit between Johnson and Kosygin at Glassboro as a conspiracy against China (16:17). Every event of the "detente" that followed--including the anti-ballistic missile talks, talks on limiting strategic arms, and talks on limiting conventional arms--was described as part of a series of "treacherous deals". After the SALT I agreements in 1972, Zhou Enlai attacked them as fraudulent because they allowed both superpowers actually to increase and improve their nuclear arms in a continuation of the arms race (in New York Times, 18 July 1972, cited in 16:29-30).

China continued its verbal attack on U.S.-Soviet bilateral arms control efforts through the period of SALT II. The 1979 accords were attacked for shifting the arms race from quantity to quality (Beijing Review, Vol 22, No. 22 (1 June 1978), pp. 21-23, cited in 71:12). The real effect of SALT II, the Chinese argued, was to bolster the Soviet-sponsored myth of detente, which covered expansion of Soviet power (*ibid.*).

In 1978 China began to participate in disarmament-related forums under United Nations auspices, and in 1979 China began to offer its own proposals (briefly chronicled in 71:11-12). Since that time, China has increased its public profile on disarmament, developing on the 1979 theme, to propose that the U.S. and the Soviet Union should take the lead by reducing their nuclear forces by 50 percent, and that nuclear force reductions be linked with conventional force reduction, under strict verification, all in the context of international participation (May-June 1982 proposals, outlined by Sismanidis in 71:12-13). At that point, China would participate in international disarmament measures (*ibid.*). The Chinese specifically addressed the issue of weapons in outer space, as well, by calling in 1982 for a treaty banning weapons in outer space (5 August 1982, cited in 71:14).

In her analysis of Chinese pronouncements, Sismanidis observed that late Spring 1984 began a period of stepped-up Chinese activities concerning disarmament and further refinements of basic positions, a process that continued through the remainder of the period of her study (71:16,18). She noted an increased emphasis on "the arms race in outer space" and a more positive Chinese attitude toward U.S.-Soviet bilateral talks (71:18).

At a regional UN symposium on disarmament, held in Beijing in March 1987, Chinese Vice-Foreign Minister Qian Qichen reiterated Chinese calls for a 50 percent reduction of U.S. and Soviet strategic forces (51:K 20). He supported the U.S.-Soviet talks on intermediate-range missiles, provided the missiles are removed both from Europe and Asia (*ibid.*). He added that "China unequivocally supports the proposals for establishment of nuclear-free zones in Latin America, the South Pacific, Africa, the Middle East, South Asia and the Korean peninsula" (but did not mention Europe or the remainder of Asia) (*ibid.*). He repeated China's support for nonproliferation and conventional disarmament,

but placed strong emphasis on the urgency of "the complete prohibition of outer space weapons" (51:K 21).

#### CHINESE RETROSPECTIVE PRONOUNCEMENTS

Retrospective coverage has added a great deal of detail and background to the decisions to establish and build the nuclear force (as seen in the previous chapter), but has shed less additional light on doctrine and strategy, and on the policy process regarding disarmament issues.

One of the more interesting observations of Pillsbury is the Chinese tendency to leap over periods of history and previous analyses, as in the case of Chinese analysis of SALT I. He noted throughout his research (16:--) that the Chinese shifted in their basic assessment of U.S.-Soviet relations as a background for their analysis of SALT: during the 1967-68 period, the Chinese accused the superpowers of "colluding" against China; during the 1969 period the superpowers were "both colluding and contending"; during the 1970-71 period discussion of their strategic relationship was simply avoided (16:26); and in 1972-74, after the SALT I signing, the Chinese settled on the formula that the superpowers were "contending for world hegemony" by means of a nuclear arms race.

More recent Chinese articles show a greater concern for explaining historical development, either of China's views or of the situation being analyzed. An example is a 1986 article by Sa Benwang in Shijie Zhishi (World Knowledge, a Chinese journal of international relations) entitled "Reagan Administration's New Strategy of 'Flexible Response'" (53:--). Sa began by crediting the Reagan administration with the ability to analyze and respond strategically to the changing world situation. He then explained the obvious parallel to the Kennedy administration's "flexible response". He periodized U.S. policy on the question of concepts of deterrence, showing that the Reagan administration's Strategic Defense Initiative represents a shift from targeting cities to targeting military installations and a shift from "mutual destruction" of the 1960s and 1970s to "multi-level deterrent" comprising both offensive and defensive elements. He analyzed the U.S. strategic policy system as composed of two factions--conservative and liberal--alternately prevailing based upon economic and political conditions, resulting in a change of policy "every 10 years on the average."

An article by Wan Guang in the 16 March 1987 issue of Liaowang (Outlook Weekly) Overseas Edition, entitled "Trends Toward Global Multipolar Development" (63:--), traced transformation of the world from the postwar bipolar system to an increasingly multipolar system, beginning in the 1960s. He characterized the current situation as a "struggle between polarization and multipolarization", in which the United States and Soviet Union "are not reconciled to giving up their hegemonic positions." He saw evidence of this in the "new arms race" in space, which seeks a new hegemony to substitute for the "nuclear monopoly" that was broken in the 1960s. He also saw evidence of this in the series of bilateral U.S.-Soviet talks since 1985 on arms control and regional problems. He asserted that bipolarism is weakening and multipolarism is becoming stronger, although not yet to the point of "disintegration

of the polarized system." He called for the further strengthening of "various independent forces" in the Third World and in Western Europe.

#### THE INTERNATIONAL AND DOMESTIC ENVIRONMENT

These Chinese pronouncements have continued to reflect changing environmental conditions, while remaining consistent with China's desire to be perceived as a major power. The state objectives, state actor model continues to explain China's nuclear policy; furthermore, as China has acquired a small nuclear force, its general foreign policy has come to reflect greater assertiveness in a "power balancing" role worldwide. China acquired an actual nuclear force, beginning during the height of the "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution", which began in 1965 and peaked in 1966. At that time, as U.S. involvement in Vietnam dramatically increased, China became obsessed with the danger from the United States, as well as the ideological challenge from the Soviets. Lin Biao's "Long Live the Victory of People's War" (1965) provided the ideological analysis of the world situation as one in which the "rural areas" of the world (China, Vietnam, etc.) would surround the "cities" of the world (the U.S., the U.S.S.R.). Although the U.S. and U.S.S.R. were currently powerful and were in collusion to crush the "rural areas", the people of the rural areas could withdraw and conduct protracted, defensive "people's war" on the basis of their own resources. By 1966 this policy line called for China to form a united front to oppose both the Soviets and the Americans without, however, provoking a major war. Pillsbury noted that the Chinese did not recognize or comment upon a "strategic balance" between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. because at the time "the two were not adversaries" (16:13).

This "dual adversary" policy continued until the aftermath of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in August 1968. The Chinese reacted bitterly to the invasion, and with alarm to the "Brezhnev Doctrine" of limited sovereignty of Socialist states. Lin Biao's reply refuted the doctrine, which implicitly applied to China, and added the theme of superpower "contention" to that of "collusion" (13:106-07). Lin's reply, expressing the official Chinese line, seemed to indicate a heightened war scare, particularly after the North Vietnamese also approved of the invasion and the Brezhnev Doctrine. At this point China was virtually surrounded, with only hints of possibilities of rapprochement with the U.S. The Soviets had steadily increased their military forces along the border with China to a reported 40 divisions, transferred from Eastern Europe, matched by a reported 50 to 60 Chinese divisions (13:114). The outbreak of violent border incidents in March and April 1969 was reported in bitter terms by the Chinese and Soviet press, but the incidents did not lead to war. At the same time, the various Chinese factions were maneuvering in preparation for the Ninth CPC Congress in April 1969, and China's first satellite launch took place on 24 April 1970, indicating incipient ICBM capability.

Adelman attributed the border disputes to provocation by Chinese factions seeking to unify the country in a surge of nationalism (24:54). Throughout the summer the Soviets carefully prepared a case for intervention or for a surgical strike, consulting East European leaders and dropping heavy hints in the press (24:55-56). The Chinese moved to defuse the situation by agreeing

to serious talks with the Soviets in September 1969 (24:55). The Soviets finally abandoned the military option in the face of China's superior diplomatic position (24:56-57) and the realization that China's nuclear force had developed to the point that the Soviets could not expect to eliminate all chances of Chinese nuclear retaliation against the Soviet Union (24:58). The Chinese continued to negotiate with the Soviets, while ordering a nationwide civil defense program in late 1969. This researcher, during travels to a number of major Chinese cities in 1985, saw the results of the program and talked with many individuals familiar with the 1970-71 program to build shelters and tunnels.

John Garver argued that, although the new Nixon administration had made some overtures to China by this time, the actual Chinese response was to tilt toward the Soviets in 1970-71 (6:Ch. 3). His methodology was content analysis of Chinese news articles, correlated with other measures of foreign relations. He explained that China did not simply practice a non-ideological power-balancing policy at the time, but attempted to rebuild an ideologically correct "Third United Front" of the Soviet Union, all other "socialist countries", and the Third World, against "U.S. imperialism". The Soviets, deeply engaged in detente and SALT I, did not play, and the Chinese turned to the U.S. to break up the detente and balance the Soviets. Needless to say, Garver's interpretation is controversial; but it casts light upon the complexity of the Chinese policy process during the violent ideological and factional struggles at that point of the Cultural Revolution when Lin Biao was apparently slipping past the peak of his power. Garver's analysis should be seen in the light of Kalicki's analysis of Chinese crisis politics, which examined crises in Sino-American relations during the 1950s (12:--). Kalicki found that in each case, when the Chinese found themselves at the brink of an explosion of a crisis, they would back off and attempt to cool the situation through quiet diplomacy. Garver's interpretation supports, in a very subtle way, the conventional wisdom that China was attempting to enlist one "power" to balance another:

Once it was agreed that the contradictions between the superpowers could be exploited, it became a question of which way China should "tilt" in order to best accomplish this. This question was debated in terms of which country constituted China's main enemy and, consequently, of the type of international united front which was to be constructed. (6:127)

In 1972 the SALT I agreements were signed, the U.S. was committed to withdrawal from Vietnam, Nixon went to China, and the Chinese dropped the line of "collusion" from their pronouncements. The Chinese had decided that the U.S. was in a period of decline concurrent with a period of Soviet expansion, and that the Soviets represented the main enemy. United Front theory called for the Chinese to enlist all potential supporters against the Soviet Union, another way of describing a type of classical power-balancing scenario. The remaining ideological problems of reliance upon an "imperialist" power--even one in strategic decline--were alleviated by an upsurge in Third World rhetoric based upon Mao's and Zhou's theories enunciated at the United Nations in 1974 by Deng Xiaoping. These new "Three Worlds" were categorized by level of economic development: the U.S. and the Soviet Union; the advanced industrial

economies of East and West; and all remaining countries. China found its natural allies in the Third World, aided by Second World countries who either opposed First World hegemony in general or could be enlisted to oppose the Soviet Union if necessary. The remaining element was the "safely" declining U.S., whose remaining power would be crucial in case of a conflict with the Soviets.

During the mid to late 1970s there was a fear that the U.S. was backing out of its world role and international commitments altogether. This would leave a dangerous power vacuum at the same time as it deprived the potential "united front" of its greatest counterweight to the Soviets. The SALT II negotiations were seen to some extent as U.S. capitulation, and did nothing actually to reduce nuclear arms. It is useful to note that China was still ruled by the "Gang of Four", ideologically radical successors of Lin Biao, whose focus on ideological issues did nothing to reverse the widespread breakdown of organization in all areas of Chinese society--particularly education and research necessary to keep up with advanced defense technology.

Deng Xiaoping was permanently "rehabilitated" in 1977, and he consolidated support for the Four Modernizations program at the famous Third Plenum of the Eleventh Central Committee in Summer 1978. The approved national program concentrated on economic development. During this time the Chinese pressed the European NATO countries and the U.S. to maintain solidarity in the face of Soviet expansion, particularly over the issue of nuclear "decoupling" and an Allied response to Soviet intermediate-range missile (SS-20) deployment. The Chinese condemned "proponents of appeasement" in the West (20:52-56); but Chinese policy in the "Second" and "Third" worlds was largely one of reaction to events, accompanied by a decline in ideological content (20:56-58).

Two important events coincided at the end of 1978 and the beginning of 1979: establishment of full diplomatic relations with the U.S., followed immediately by a Chinese "punitive" invasion of Vietnam, which had just strengthened its ties with the Soviets in connection with invading and occupying China's ally Kampuchea. To the Chinese, U.S. actions indicated U.S. support for China in general, and in particular a willingness to back the Chinese and Kampucheans (Pol Pot) against Soviet-backed Vietnam. The Chinese were disappointed by the failure of the U.S. to take a strong position against the Soviets, and concluded the U.S. would not live up to Chinese expectations for the 'strategic relationship' (20:87-90). The 1979 NATO two-track agreement on INF modernization did, however, alleviate the worst Chinese fears that NATO would effectively disintegrate or capitulate over the issue.

Until well into the Reagan administration, China's relations with the U.S. remained ambivalent. Not confident in a favorable outcome of the Carter administration's "debate of two lines" (Vance and Brzezinski) over relations with the U.S.S.R. and the PRC, China returned to cultivation of the Third World and the United Front. The 1980 U.S. presidential campaign was greatly troubling to China, because it pitted the current vice president of a weakened administration against a Republican candidate whose rhetoric and supporters indicated fundamental hostility toward the PRC and support for the rival government on Taiwan. U.S.-Chinese relations were left hanging while the Chinese leadership waited to see how the Reagan administration performed in

office. In the meantime China put together an overall foreign policy program based upon independence, nonalignment, and renewed attention to the Third World. It should be noted that this superseded the previous anti-Soviet "United Front", in effect restoring the balance by making renewed approaches to the Soviet Bloc. This formulation was outlined in time for Premier Zhao Ziyang's presentation at the Third World Summit meeting at Cancun in 1981 and was completed in time for the Twelfth Party Congress in September 1982. By that time China had secured U.S. agreement in August to renounce any "two-Chinas" policy and to reduce the sale of arms to Taiwan.

Robert Sutter examined the Chinese calculations behind the 1981-82 strategy (20:177-86). He believed the Chinese had based their policy on an assessment that the U.S. was reasserting its balancing role against the Soviets; the Soviets had for the moment reached a point of resistance in their expansionist efforts, and that some U.S. officials still considered China strategically valuable (20:177). By mid-1983 the situation changed: China's "evenhandedness" was alienating the U.S., and the U.S. was minimizing the importance of China and was returning to a bipolar focus (*ibid.*). The response was the 1984 Chinese policy of simultaneously improving relations with the Soviets while consolidating relations with the U.S. and the West. This policy holds true at the present, providing a guideline for 'tactical' maneuvers within an overall strategic course.

Michel Oksenberg described China's current situation as "confident nationalism":

The Chinese now perceive that strategic parity exists between the Soviet Union and the United States and is likely to persist through the rest of the century. This gives Beijing breathing room. As a result, instead of calling for Sino-American strategic cooperation, Beijing now underscores its determination to pursue an independent foreign policy. (18:507)

Noting Mao's dictum that "political power grows out of the barrel of a gun", it is useful to review Chinese military developments, particularly the growth of the nuclear force since the mid 1960s. By 1987 China had been estimated to have a land-based force of roughly a hundred nuclear-armed ballistic missiles, of which a handful are intercontinental, as well as at least one nuclear submarine with nuclear missiles (44:268). A force of this type is described by Zhang Jianshi in a 1987 article in LAD:

Nuclear force is an important material condition that helps medium-sized nuclear powers free themselves from manipulation and control by superpowers and to play their part in world affairs.

The strategic nuclear theory serves a dual purpose. On the one hand, it is the theoretical basis for formulating a nuclear war strategy and belongs to the category of military strategic theory; on the other hand, it is a major component in the state security strategy and belongs to the category of the state security strategic theory because it has a direct influence on the state strategy.

In the eyes of hegemonists, the nuclear deterrent is always

regarded as equal as nuclear blackmail. However, peace loving medium-sized nuclear powers do not take the nuclear deterrent strategy as a strategy of launching nuclear wars but of forcing their opponents not to dare to launch nuclear wars rashly by means of possessing and developing nuclear weapons. In a certain sense, this strategy can also be termed a strategy of "resisting the nuclear deterrent." (68:--).

Zhang went on to describe the function of nuclear weapons:

In terms of strategy, nuclear weapons have four functions:

- 1) When manpower, firepower, and military equipment of conventional troops are short, or when they are reduced to inferiority, deployment or use of tactical or war-zone nuclear weapons can make up and readjust conventional forces.
- 2) In terms of the "positive-defensive" strategy, medium- and short-range missiles with nuclear warheads and tactical nuclear weapons that have actual combat capacity can serve as an actual threat to the enemy's heavy massing of forces and preparations for large-scale offensive.
- 3) In strategic confrontation, nuclear weapons can work as a backup force at a critical moment and force the enemy to politically consider the problem of its self-defense, thus deterring the enemy's blackmail and intimidation to a certain extent.
- 4) In border conflicts and wars in which small nations act as agents, the nuclear retaliation capacity of medium-sized nuclear powers can somewhat stop intervention and meddling by big powers. (68:--).

#### CONCLUSIONS

It is apparent from the preceding discussion that China regards its nuclear force as a means of deterring threats to its existence and as a means of deterring "nuclear blackmail" against actions that China may find it necessary to take in its national interest. It is apparent that China's image of its relationship to the world is as a major power operating on the basis of state interests in an international system characterized by a power balance among major actors. China sees itself in a position of maneuverability, taking advantage of shifting international power relations to apply its own power in the national interest of itself and its friends and clients.

## Chapter Five

### FUTURE TRENDS OR CONTINGENCIES

#### EXTRAPOLATION OF CURRENT TRENDS

China's nuclear policy can be extrapolated on the basis of a rational-actor, state-centered model, correlated with the U.S.-Soviet balance at the time. Present PRC leadership envisions a near-term environment of minimal threat of major war involving the superpowers, as a result of the rough nuclear parity of the superpowers and of the adequate strength of Chinese forces. China's policy will be to maintain the balance.

China's current national strategy is based upon a 1985 Central Military Commission estimate that there will be no major war by at least the year 2000, and that the PLA's national defense construction plan should change from basing work on the combat readiness posture of "fighting an early war, a major war, a nuclear war to the track of peacetime construction" (45:--). The PRC Seminar on Defense Strategy in the Year 2000, cited above, also discussed the view that the dominant factor in the international environment would be a combination of the role of polarization of the U.S. and the Soviet Union, and the role of multipolarization (of the world). This is developed in two senses. First, while the center of the world economy will shift to the Asian-Pacific region, the focus of bipolar rivalry will remain in Europe. Second, "there will be a relatively great flying leap in China's national strength", which will affect the power balance and "the U.S.-Soviet bipolar structure." By the year 2000 the world will no longer be bipolar: "it will be a tripod" (ibid.).

In a future based upon extrapolation of current trends out 5 to 15 years, it is useful to look at two areas of interest: the trend of the global strategic balance and the trend of arms control efforts. A Chinese writer, previously cited, addressed "the significance of developing nuclear weapons for medium-sized nuclear powers":

For medium-sized nuclear powers, strategic missiles with nuclear warheads are an important means of containing wars and defending their security. In developing nuclear weapons, there is a relatively stable "saturation point" for all countries, which is marked by "sufficient quantity" and "reliable quality." Before their nuclear weapons reach "saturation point," medium-sized nuclear powers have a deterrent factor too, but they are very liable to have their nuclear force disarmed by the enemy's first attack because the actual combat capability of their nuclear weapons is not yet strong enough. In terms of strategy, this

period of time can therefore be regarded as a period of "latent danger." Before the period of "latent danger" is over, their nuclear deterrent is still not reliable and the investment in building their nuclear force should not be readjusted or reduced. After 30 years of painstaking build up, the nuclear arsenals of the United States and Soviet Union are now in a state of "supersaturation." However, several medium-sized nuclear powers have only a small number of nuclear weapons for protecting their own security. Therefore, we should be clear about the essential distinction on the question of disarmament. (68:K 31)

It can be inferred from this argument that China has neither reached its "saturation point" nor is ready to consider reductions in its nuclear force without far-reaching reductions in U.S. and Soviet nuclear forces. On the other hand, there is little in Chinese nuclear doctrine to indicate a massive nuclear buildup is being considered.

The current Chinese military modernization plan is first of all based on the assessment that there will be no major war for at least the remainder of the century. This assessment, as previously indicated, is based upon an analysis of the trends in the international balance of power, including the capability of China's nuclear and conventional forces to deter attack. An article in the 21 March 1987 issue of LAD (26:--), "Army Building Is Centered on Modernization", makes the point that "our country must concentrate its national and financial strength on economic construction. Consequently there cannot be a big increase in military spending in the near future." The Chinese intend to pursue their economic development in two steps: the end of the century, and the middle of the next century, with military modernization at an appropriate rate and subordinated to economic construction.

Since 1985 China has given extensive publicity to military modernization steps that are taking place. The first step was to reduce the size of the PLA by one million, and to reorganize and retrain the remaining number, with emphasis on technical and professional excellence and modern combined-arms conventional warfare doctrine. Yang Dezhi, chief of the PLA General Staff, described the modernization program for Beijing Radio in a March 1987 broadcast (64:--). After describing the manpower cuts, the reorganization, and the training effort, Yang noted that "our Army has made new strides in scientific research for national defense and in the development of sophisticated weapons." Other articles focus on new communications, including satellite communications and automated command and control systems. A Xinhua article of 1 February 1987 (28:--) announced a "fairly complete system of defense projects" which "includes a well-protected automatic commanding network, a network to ensure the counter-attack ability of strategic nuclear forces, and strategic bases for air and naval forces. A civil air defense system has also been built to protect the country's residential, political, economic, industrial and communications centers. . . . The projects . . . display strong protective ability against nuclear attack. . . ."

The Soviets have noticed the growth of China's nuclear forces. In 1983 former Soviet leader Yuri Andropov observed the gradually-growing Chinese nuclear capability and remarked on the potential for China to "make a considerable contribution" to "prevention of nuclear war and the cessation of the

nuclear arms race" (25:3). Andropov was evidently referring to Chinese participation in strategic arms control. Ilyin and Likin, in a 1984 article, grasp the implication of the Chinese "globalism" from a Soviet point of view: they point out that China commented upon Soviet IRBMs but not on equivalent U.S. systems; that Deng Xiaoping approved a U.S. buildup in the Pacific; and that China was concerned about maintaining U.S.-Western European unity (43:92). In view of Soviet agreement to eliminate intermediate-range nuclear forces, which constitute a sensitive and "decoupling" threat to China, it will be interesting to see how the Soviets approach the problem of maintaining nuclear deterrence against China without increasingly linking deterrence of China to the central nuclear balance between the U.S. and the Soviet Union. Ballistic missile defenses are an option for both the Soviets and the U.S., although the Chinese put up a brave front by pointing out the U.S. lack of capability to produce and deploy space-based SDI systems (68:K 31).

Extrapolation of current trends to the year 2000 would see China with a much-improved economy, including a solid industrial base and possession of advanced levels of technology. With a professionalized military of high-quality officers and troops, China would be in a practical position to equip that force with modern weapons in sufficient numbers to field a formidable armed force. Because of expectations that U.S. and Soviet nuclear superiority will continue, China would not be likely to use such a force to attack the U.S.S.R. or areas of vital interest to the U.S. However, modern Chinese conventional forces would greatly increase China's influence in the Asian region; and China's possession of nuclear weapons would deter superpower "blackmail" over regional conflicts involving China.

#### AN ALTERNATIVE "FUTURE"

A Chinese article already cited commented on the trend toward multipolarization:

In recent years, more and more countries have introduced multi-directional diplomacy and developed multilateral foreign economic relations in order to avoid being dictated to by this or that superpower, keep foreign relations from being confined to one given side, achieve relatively great leverage, and bring about balanced multilateral relations. This enables a country to better resist foreign intervention and imposition and seek relatively independent development. Various independent forces in the world are also actively entering into harmonious cooperation and strengthening the ability to resist and restrain the strength of the two polarities. (63:A 5)

Chinese foreign policy goals are set on the basis of increasing Chinese domestic development and increasing China's ability to conduct an independent foreign policy. For China, the ideal environment for the foreseeable future is a multipolar system with a limited number of major actors, approximating the two-tier system of the United Nations (of which China is one of the five nuclear-armed permanent members of the Security Council). The first tier would include China, and the second echelon would be free of permanent

political polarizations. Recent Chinese attention to efforts to revive the moribund Western European Union (which was supplanted by NATO) indicate the favor with which China would look upon a strong, independent, united Western Europe as an additional counterweight to the superpower relationship.

The likely Chinese response to increased superpower rivalry would be to maintain nuclear forces sufficient to tilt the balance, while attempting to maintain stable political relations among the three powers. The likely Chinese response to renewed superpower "collusion" would be to cultivate improved political and security relations with Japan and Western Europe, upon whom the U.S. depends.

SELECTED CONTINGENCIES:  
U.S.-SOVIET ARMS CONTROL AGREEMENTS

Certain specific environmental contingencies, such as major U.S.-Soviet arms control agreements, would result in specific Chinese responses to maintain independence and leverage. This report will look at two contingencies: a major nuclear and conventional force reduction limited to Central Europe, and a U.S.-Soviet agreement to cut strategic forces by 50 percent.

A major Central European force reduction would pose a security problem for China, because it would tilt the Asian conventional balance against China. This would happen if Soviet forces were redeployed rather than demobilized, allowing them to transfer at any time to the Asian region. It would also happen if the Soviet forces were demobilized, because the military tension in Central Europe forms a counterbalance to Soviet ability to pressure China with conventional forces. China would respond by augmenting its conventional forces, its nuclear forces, or both, unless the Soviets agreed to force reductions in Asia as well. Chinese force augmentation before the completion of economic modernization would deal a heavy blow to modernization plans. The ideal solution for the Chinese would be balanced European and Asian force reductions, reducing tension as well as reducing China's military burden during the modernization period.

The second contingency is U.S. and Soviet acceptance of China's challenge to reduce superpower strategic forces by 50 percent. China apparently calculates that such a reduction would drop the superpowers below the "super-saturation" level of weapons (see 68:K 31). The practical meaning would be that neither the Soviets nor the U.S. could expect to disarm one another in a first strike. Nor would the U.S. or the Soviet Union be likely to attempt a disarming strike against China's nuclear forces, for fear of attack by the remaining superpower. Zhang Jianshi's article (*ibid.*) implies that the Chinese would not agree to reduce their own nuclear weapons except as part of a process in which all nuclear powers maintain an equivalent level of deterrence at each stage.

Zhang concludes that

The nuclear deterrent theory of 'mutually assured destruction' will remain the key factor affecting the world strategic pattern. Under such circumstances, the superpowers are in a position to

destroy medium-sized nuclear powers with their nuclear weapons, but they themselves could not withstand retaliatory blows dealt by medium-sized nuclear powers by launching some dozens or even hundreds of missiles with nuclear warheads. The fact shows that there is a "workable" balance of nuclear forces in the nuclear confrontation between medium-sized nuclear powers and the superpowers. (68:K 32)

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